

ABSTRACT

An improved drive unit for propelling a watercraft through shallow water comprising a steering box pivotally attached to the watercraft transom; a first drive shaft extending through the transom to the steering box; a second drive connected to said first drive shaft by means of a double universal joint; and a drive shaft housing for the second drive shaft, the housing being pivotally connected to the steering box to allow the drive shaft housing to pivot vertically on the steering box. A propeller is mounted to the second propeller shaft for propelling the watercraft. A single action spring-return hydraulic ram, said ram having a housing, a piston and a piston rod, is attached to absorb movement of the shaft housing in the event that an obstacle is encountered. The hydraulic ram is provided with means for moving the ram piston and thereby the piston rod to raise and lower said drive shaft housing and propeller.